

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter presents a review of the literature that is connected to the topic of this study. It consists of education problems in the US, how the US government deal with the problems, and how the students deal with the problems.

2.1 Education Problems in the US

On this day, in this globalization era, there are a lot of things happened in society, especially in the Education system. Some people think that Education is important but not a few of them think that it is not. Moreover, those who live in a rural place or remote area, think that education is not necessary because going to work is better than taking education. One of the reasons is, with working, people gain a lot of money meanwhile education, we spend some money to pursue it. Some people do not completely understand that education can open doors to those impossible opportunities to possible where it is from education and preparation that we received in school. However, education did not come perfectly. There are some obstacles and lackness that comes with it. In the US, several education problems afflict students and the government. Some of them are bullying, mental health, and the failure of public schools.

2.1.1 Bullying

Bullying has been a damaging problem among the youth today. Reports of violence in schools have become widespread across the U.S., and the solidity of bullying violence is increasing, there is a federal policy deficit on

the issue (Espelage & Swearer, 2003). Although bullying is a problem that has persisted for generations, today's youth are experiencing bullying in extraordinary and increasingly invasive ways due to the growth of social media and the associated potential for spreading slur images or threatening messages worldwide with great speed and frequency (Law et al., 2012). With this digital era, bullying not just occur physically but it come from the internet too, that is what we called, Cyberbullying. Cyberbullying dominates the internet right now and this is a very concerning problem in society especially the students with low self-esteem and cannot defend themselves from this kind of treatment. Often, the result is bullies with the raise of capabilities to exploit their targets using images that may or may not be authentic. Consequently, despite school districts' anti-bullying policies and prevention programs, cyberbullying has become a general bullying method associated with higher levels of depression than traditional bullying (Wang et al., 2011). The definition of success in an American school is measured primarily by academic standards yet bullying is a major factor that has to prevent children's success in school (Molcho et al., 2009). When they are not the victim, some children may witness bullying but does not speak up or intervene at all, and they become distracted by emotions of anxiety, fear, anger (McLain, 2018). Furthermore, there are many cases of bullying incidents that have turned into matters of life-threatening violence. For example, in June 2017, a 12-year-old girl, took her own life because she has been receiving malicious comments from her friends on Snapchat calling her "loser", making fun of her looks, and threatening her to end her life

(“New Jersey School Sued Over Bullied Girl’s Suicide,” 2018). According to BBC News (2018), her parents are suing Copeland middle school for ignoring their daughter's repeated complaints about her being targeted. Filed on Tuesday, nearly a year after Mallory's death on 14 June 2017 the lawsuit accuses Copeland Middle School of failing to take significant action to prevent bullying. Often, students who are different from other peers due to gender nonconformity, physical appearance and ability, or psychological traits outside of recognized or established norms are more likely to be judged, isolated, and teased by other students (Gay & Network, 2012).

2.1.2 Mental Health

Bullying can lead to mental health problems. Because the victim is facing the pressure mentally and verbally. That is why mental health had been a concerning issue among the higher education institutions. A researcher, presents the most compelling and thorough evidence to date that mental health problems rising substantially in college student populations (Eisenberg, 2019). The association between academic pressure and suicide continues into the university years and is evident in such diverse cultural settings as the USA and South Korea (Cooper & Hornby, 2018). A recent United Educator (UE, 2019) claims a study conducted over a five-year period shows that student mental health issues on college campuses are growing, dangerous, and costly. Students with higher education are mostly those generations who experience a higher level of stress, depression, and anxiety than any prior generation and the pressure from college life can create these mental health issues and these mental health issues in young

people come with some factors, including issues like harassment and assault, student debt, and future careers (Staglin, 2019). Stressful college environment and a lot of pressure can be the main reason of how people struggling with mental health. Furthermore, the rising of mental health problems in young generation populations noted earlier that mental health problems are not just some trend that has been happening in US colleges and universities. For example, a 22 years old American college student, Gilbert Sadana, still have a couple of months before he graduates from Georgetown University, but anxiety about his future is already keeping him up at night. Gilbert stated that everyone is trying to put themselves in competition with others and more focus on the professional aspect rather than on having fun or doing things that are focused on the college experience. Over the past decade, rates of depression, psychological distress, and suicidal thoughts and action have risen significantly among people 26 and younger, with some highest increases among women and those at higher income levels (Bahrapour, 2019).

2.1.3 Public School Funding

The best dream of public education is simple. Students, ideally, would go to school, receive a high standard education from a skillful teacher, would work hard in their class, and create a new set of skills, talents, and capabilities. Budget cuts have created a big problem for most public schools in recent years (Chen, 2019). Less funding means that smaller staffs, fewer resources, and a lower number of services for students. Meanwhile, some people argue that giving more money to education will not solve the

problems, others claim that a lack of funding caused many of the problems in the first place. There are many problems in public school today, but identifying those issues is just only half of it. With a bunch list of challenges to face, now is the time for educators, parents, and lawmakers to come together and begin to find the solutions – for the sake of all students in public schools today. According to Forbes news media on 2019, stated that low wealth districts, especially those serving concentrations of students from low-income families, were hardest hit by the cuts. In many cases, they experienced teacher layoffs, increased class sizes, and reduced services in areas ranging from counseling to after school programs (Hammond, 2019) .

2.2 How the US Government Dealt with the Problems

Bullying, mental health, and public school problems that had been mentioned before, can be avoided or prevented the problems to happen, it depends on how the US government dealt with it. There are several ways to deal with it.

2.2.1 Bullying

State and local governments have taken action to prevent bullying and protect the children. The Federal Partners in Bullying Prevention developed and currently working on a stopbullying.gov website to connect with students, parents, and educators as part of a broad Stop Bullying campaign. This coalition includes a representative from the U.S Departments of Agriculture, Defense, Education, Health and Human Services, the Interior, and Justice, as well as the Federal Trade Commission and the White House Initiative on Asian Americans and

Pacific Islanders (Human Services, n.d.). The partnership is an effort to address school safety and to prevent bullying happen all over the school in the US. Based on the stopbullying.gov page, each jurisdiction, including all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and U.S territories, addresses bullying differently. Some have set up laws, policies, and regulations. Others, such as the model of policies schools and local educational agencies can develop their laws, policies, and regulations. Therefore, each district has its regulation on how they handle bullying cases.

2.2.2 Mental Health

Some colleges and universities are trying to get over the mental health problems that have been going around by implementing proactive programs to address the problem. Schools like Duke University, Davidson College, UCLA, and Rutgers are conducting research involving student mental health and discovering innovative treatment (Staglin, 2019). An example of a proactive treatment approach comes from UCLA. “Through the UCLA Depression Grand Challenge, I discovered a new and unique system of care in 2017, referred to as Screening, Tracking, and Treatment for Anxiety and Depression (STAND) program, that offers screening, tracking, and treatment to all students for anxiety, depression, and suicidality.” In addition, to prevent mental health for students case, many schools are finding ways to provide access to resources in ways that best fit the organization and the needs of their student body. For example, Davidson and others are turning an

external service, *Therapy Assistance Online*, for students with less severe cases of depression and anxiety to hold the capacity for the most severe cases on-site. NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) also supports funding to allow schools to train faculty and staff on the early warning signs of mental health conditions and how to link students to services. Investing in children's mental health improves the lives of children and families. When children get the right care at the right time, we can prevent negative outcomes like school failure, hospitalization, and even suicide.

2.2.3 Public School Funding

Education had been the major issue in the 2000 presidential campaign. Federal government responsibilities toward education have always been limited. The small slice of federal funding for education mostly goes to "categorical" programs. The two largest serve poor (Title I) and handicapped (special education) students. There is much that federal and state governments can do to make a difference in achieving greater equity and adequacy in school funding (Loveless & Ravitch, 2000). The federal government can:

- Equalize allocations of resources from the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) across states, so that high-poverty states receive a greater and fairer share of federal funds, rather than relying on current measures of spending that disadvantage of poor states.
- Require states that receive federal funds to report not only on achievement progress but also the states movement toward

adequacy and equitable access to education resources—such as the availability of well-qualified teachers; strong curriculum opportunities; books, material and equipment (such as science labs and computers); and adequate facilities – and plan for further progress (Hammond, 2019).

In recent years, democrats and republicans alike have supported dramatically extending federal reach into schools. Placing more technology into classrooms, establishing school disciplinary codes, deciding how reading will be taught, recruiting new teachers, and determining their qualifications, launching after-school programs, selecting exemplary math textbooks. Those are just a few areas that were once the sole responsibility of state and local schools official but that now seem to be regarded as the proper subject for federal action (Loveless & Ravitch, 2000)

2.3 How the Students Deal with the Problems

Besides how the government deal with those education problems happens in the United States, students also have a part in how to deal with it.

2.3.1 Bullying

Bullying is an aggressive action that is intentional and involves power and strength. Preventing and stopping bullying involves a commitment to creating a safe environment where children can thrive, socially, and academically without being afraid. APA (American Psychological

Association) recommends that students take the following action to address bullying (Dorlen et al., 2011).

- **Report Bullying and Cyberbullying**

Students need to report any bullying to parents or school counselor or any adult they trust. Often kids did not report cyberbullying or bullying because they are afraid their parents will take away their phone or ignore the condition. When parents, should not ignore their children and give them support.

- **Don't Bully Back**

It may be difficult to not bully back, but as the saying goes, two wrongs don't make a right. Try not to show anger or tears. Either calmly tell the bully to stop the bullying or simply walk away.

- **Avoid being alone**

Whenever possible, avoid situations where there are no other students or teachers. Try to go to a bathroom or a quiet place with friends to prevent bullying.

2.3.2 Mental Health

There is a lot of public mental health service that has been located in schools and universities. It's just a matter of students to recognize the early signs of mental illness. Mostly, students did not sense the early signs and just go with it and this can make it worst. It may be difficult to approach someone regarding their illnesses. After all, people often dislike being told they are sick, what they are feeling, or what they should do. Recognizing signs of depression may be tricky. There are some signs

to notice depression in others or ourself such as; not enjoying activities they once loved, no longer attend classes or social outings, experiencing extreme anger or sadness over a relationship in their life, react negatively or with apathy to most things, and often talk about death or suicide (Colleges, 2020). Students need to seek help from professionals for any level of depression.

2.3.3 Public School Funding

Government spending on education is also financed in a capital asset such as allocation of equipment for teaching purposes (Abdullah et al., 2017). Some part of the allocation is purposely to build education infrastructure in the college and training institute. It is to improve the capacity of students (as customers) and reducing operating costs for a private college to ensure poor students also get an educational opportunity such as other people (Orunaboka & Nwachukwu, 2012). There are governments allocated in scholarship and study loans to university or college students (Curtis, 2004). It is important for students because it is one of the human capital investments that can give benefits in the future to individuals or society in terms of future income, competitiveness, and productiveness. On the other hand, without the scholarship or study loans, students should pay the cost of education by their financing.